

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 9, 13, 18, 21, 23 and 25-28 as follows:

1. (Once Amended) A punch for cutting a hole in a workpiece, said workpiece having a pilot hole provided therethrough, said punch comprising:

a punch body;

means for cutting the workpiece, said cutting means extending from said punch body a predetermined distance; and

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means for centering said punch body with the pilot hole of the workpiece, said centering means extending from said punch body a predetermined distance, said centering means extending from said punch body a greater distance than said cutting means such that said centering means enters the pilot hole of the workpiece prior to said cutting means cutting the workpiece.

2. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 1, wherein said punch body has an axial bore therethrough, and wherein said centering means comprises a member positioned within said axial bore of said punch body.

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9. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 1, wherein said punch body has an axial bore therethrough, and wherein said centering means comprises first and second projections positioned opposite of each other and adjacent to said axial bore of said punch body.

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13. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 1, wherein said punch body has an axial bore therethrough, and wherein said cutting means comprises first and second piercing portions extending from said punch body for piercing the workpiece and first and second cutting portions extending from said punch body for shearing the workpiece.

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18. (Once Amended) A punch for cutting a hole in a workpiece, said workpiece having a pilot hole provided therethrough, said punch comprising:

a punch body having an axial bore therethrough;

at least one piercing portion extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for piercing the workpiece;

at least one cutting portion extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for shearing the workpiece after said at least one piercing portion has pierced the workpiece;

and

a member positioned within said axial bore of said punch body for centering said punch body with the pilot hole of the workpiece, said member extending further away from said punch body than said at least one piercing portion such that said member engages the pilot hole of the workpiece prior to said at least one piercing portion piercing the workpiece.

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21. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 19, wherein said insert has first and second ends, said first end of said insert being fastened into said axial bore of said punch body, said second end of said insert having a chamfered edge, said second end extending further away from said punch body than said at least one piercing portion.

23. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 21, wherein said second end of said insert extends approximately 1/16 inch further away from said punch body than said at least one piercing portion.

25. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 18, wherein said at least one piercing portion comprises a pair of piercing portions, said pair of piercing portions are positioned opposite each other along an edge of said punch body.

26. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 25, wherein said at least one cutting portion comprises a pair of cutting portions, said pair of cutting portions are positioned opposite each other and extend generally from one of said piercing portions to said other of said piercing portions, said cutting portions have cutting edges along said edge of said punch body and extend from said edge of said punch body to said axial bore of said punch body.

27. (Once Amended) A punch for cutting a hole in a workpiece, said workpiece having a pilot hole provided therethrough, said punch comprising:

a punch body having an axial bore therethrough;

at least one piercing portion extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for piercing the workpiece;

at least one cutting portion extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for shearing the workpiece after said at least one piercing portion has pierced the workpiece; and

at least one projection extending from said punch body a predetermined distance and positioned opposite of each other and adjacent to said axial bore of said punch body, said at

least one projection capable of centering said punch body with the pilot hole of the workpiece, said at least one projection extending further away from said punch body than said at least one piercing portion such that said at least one projection engages the pilot hole of the workpiece prior to said at least one piercing portion piercing the workpiece.

28. (Once Amended) A punch as defined in claim 27, wherein said at least one piercing portion comprises first and second piercing portions, said at least one cutting portion comprises first and second cutting portions, and said at least one projection comprises first and second projections, said first piercing portion has first and second surfaces which meet to form a point, said first surface of said first piercing portion slopes downwardly from said point of said first piercing portion toward said first projection and said first cutting portion, said second surface of said first piercing portion extends axially downwardly to said second cutting portion, said second piercing portion has first and second surfaces which meet to form a point, said first surface of said second piercing portion slopes downwardly from said point of said second piercing portion toward said second projection and said second cutting portion, said second surface of said second piercing portion extends axially downwardly to said first cutting portion.

Please add claims 32-36 as follows:

32. (New) A punch for cutting a hole in a workpiece, said workpiece having a pilot hole provided therethrough, said punch comprising:
a punch body having an axial bore therethrough;

first and second piercing portions extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for piercing the workpiece; and

first and second cutting portions extending from said punch body a predetermined distance for shearing the workpiece after said at least one piercing portion has pierced the workpiece,

wherein said first piercing portion has first and second surfaces which meet to form a point, said first surface of said first piercing portion slopes downwardly from said point of said first piercing portion toward said axial bore and said first cutting portion, said second surface of said first piercing portion extending axially downwardly to said second cutting portion, and wherein said second piercing portion has first and second surfaces which meet to form a point, said first surface of said second piercing portion slopes downwardly from said point of said second piercing portion toward said axial bore and said second cutting portion, said second surface of said second piercing portion extends axially downwardly to said first cutting portion.

33. (New) A punch as defined in claim 32, wherein said first cutting portion slopes downwardly from said first surface of said first piercing portion to said second surface of said second piercing portion, and wherein said second cutting portion slopes downwardly from said first surface of said second piercing portion to said second surface of said first piercing portion, such that said first and second cutting portions slope downwardly in opposite directions.

34 (New) A punch as defined in claim 33, wherein said first and second cutting portions have outer peripheral edges which form cutting edges on opposite sides of said punch body.

35. (New) A punch as defined in claim 32, further including first and second projections extending from said punch body a predetermined distance and positioned opposite of each other and adjacent to said axial bore, said first and second projections capable of centering said punch body with the pilot hole of the workpiece, said first and second projections extending further away from said punch body than said first and second piercing portions such that said first and second projections engage the pilot hole of the workpiece prior to said first and second piercing portions piercing the workpiece.

36. (New) A punch as defined in claim 32, further including an insert member positioned within said axial bore for centering said punch body with the pilot hole of the workpiece, said insert member extending further away from said punch body than said first and second piercing portions such that said insert member engages the pilot hole of the workpiece prior to said first and second piercing portions piercing the workpiece.